

December 17, 2019

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste  
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**Lower Colgan Creek Restoration Phase 2 Project**

**ECM PIN CW-827322; WDID 1B161072WNSO  
Sonoma County**

On August 15, 2016, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Steve Brady of the City of Santa Rosa (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed Lower Colgan Creek Restoration Phase 2 Project (project).

**Project Location**

The project is located on Colgan Creek between Victoria Drive and Boron Avenue in Santa Rosa, at latitude 38.4096°N and longitude 122.7246°W. The proposed project would cause disturbances to Colgan Creek and an adjacent seasonal wetland, within the Middle Russian River hydrologic area (114.21).

**Project Description**

The purpose of the project is to increase riparian habitat value, water quality, and flood protection by increasing flood plain connectivity and in-channel complexity along 2,000 linear feet of Colgan Creek.

Colgan Creek is currently an earthen flood control channel with some rip rap along the toe of the banks. Channelization straightened the channel, lengthened the channel by relocating the channel southeast of its historic location, and significantly altered the habitat. After channelization routine maintenance regularly removed woody vegetation to maintain the flood carrying capacity of the channel. In recent years, maintenance has been reduced in anticipation of the restoration and willows and other woody species have taken hold along the creek banks. Construction will relocate the channel and enlarge the cross-sectional area of the channel to allow for habitat features, native plantings, and increase the flood capacity to carry the 100-year storm. The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation will be planting 1,745 native trees and shrubs throughout the project area and native willows will be planted along ~870 linear feet of the creek. In-stream wetland habitat impacted will be 0.4 acres and ~0.45 acres will be created after completion of the project.

The project will greatly enhance the natural functions of Lower Colgan Creek and is designed to provide the following community and environmental benefits:

- Increase the riparian canopy in both width and cover over the restoration reach. The widened channel will increase the area available for aquatic and terrestrial species living within or migrating along the creek.
- Increase stream length by ~250 feet by re-creating a meandering channel.
- Increase habitat diversity with log habitat structures to support pool development; boulder clusters to create natural riffles; and in-channel islands to support a variety of organisms and their life stages. In addition, the Project will add floodplains dominated by sedges (*Carex* sp.) and rushes (*Juncus* sp.), with a dominant tree canopy of oaks (*Quercus* sp.) and willow (*Salix* sp.).
- Remove invasive species and install genetically appropriate native species throughout the Project area. The site is dominated by Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) and non-native grasses like Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*), rip-gut brome (*Bromus diandrus*) and wild oat (*Avena fatua*).
- Increase flood capacity of the channel from 25-year to 100-year flood capacity, by increasing the channel width and reconnecting the creek to a portion of its historical floodplain.
- Increase ground water infiltration by slowing the flow within the channel. The Project will increase the thalweg length from 1,950 to 2,200 feet by introducing meander into the existing flood control channel.
- Improve water quality by reducing sediment from failing banks, increasing canopy cover over the channel and providing a vegetated floodplain that increases the surface area for plants to cleanse pollutants and excess nutrients from the storm runoff.

### **Construction Timing**

The project is expected to take place between June and October of 2020 and would take approximately 137 days to complete.

### **Impacts**

The project would temporarily impact approximately 3.08 acres or 2,000 linear feet of Colgan Creek, including a 0.01-acre seasonal wetland beyond the top of bank that would be permanently impacted by the realigned channel.

### **Mitigation for Project Impacts**

The project is a restoration project except for the seasonal wetland, which will be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio with credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank.

### **Other Agency Permits**

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for Nationwide Permit 27, *Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Enhancement, and Establishment Activities*, pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The applicant has also submitted a section 1600 Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration and Incidental Take Permit application for California tiger salamander impacts to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

## **CEQA**

As lead agency, the City of Santa Rosa certified a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH 2010072004), pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

## **Public Comments**

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Kaete King at (707) 576-2848 or [Kaete.King@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Kaete.King@waterboards.ca.gov) within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The Regional Water Board's project file includes the application for certification and additional details of the proposed project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

191217KRK\_dp\_Colgan Creek Restoration Phase 2\_PN